



New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116
John Pappalardo, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 6, 2008
TO: Groundfish Oversight Committee
FROM: Groundfish Plan Development Team
SUBJECT: **Effort Control Development**

1. At the October 30, 2008 Committee meeting, the Committee directed the PDT to prepare two effort control alternatives based on Options 3 and 4 from the PDT's May 30, 2008 memo. In that memo, Option 3 primarily used a 24 hour clock without differential DAS, DAS reduction, trip limits, and an offshore GOM closed area. Option 4 relied on restricted gear areas, the default DAS reduction, trip limits, and differential DAS.

2. The revised options are described in the enclosure, along with the estimated changes in exploitation. Please note that the 24-hour clock option (3A) no longer includes a large offshore closure in the GOM, and the DAS reduction is not quite as large as described earlier. The restricted gear area option (4A) includes a larger DAS reduction in order to better meet the mortality objectives.

3. The Committee should be aware there is considerable uncertainty in these results. The 24-hour clock is difficult to model in the Closed Area Model because of data limitations and the design of the model. The impact of restricted gear areas is difficult to predict since the performance of the gear in commercial fisheries may be different than experimental results – and in some cases experimental results are not available. The exploitation reductions shown here do not estimate a reduction for the gear changes because it cannot be reliably modeled.

4. The Committee also directed the PDT to modify the Category B DAS program to better target healthy stocks, and to develop an area in SNE where drop chains would be required for small mesh fisheries, and a rebuilding strategy for northern windowpane flounder. This work is ongoing but may not be completed prior to the November Council meeting.

Enclosure 1 – Revised Effort Control Options

(Note: Numbering of the options in this document is intended to facilitate comparison to the May 30, 2008 options. Numbering in the draft amendment may change.)

Option 3A – 24 hour clock, Restricted Gear Areas, DAS reduction

This option eliminates differential DAS counting areas, reduces Category A DAS by 50 percent, and counts all DAS in 24-hour increments (i.e. 6 hours is counted as one DAS, 25 hours is counted as two DAS, etc.). The category A/Category B DAS split that results is 27.5%/72.5%. Most other current measures remain, including seasonal and rolling closures and gear requirements. Trip limits would be:

Cod – 2,000 lbs./DAS; maximum 8,000 lbs/trip in GOM, 20,000 lbs/trip GB; 500 lbs./DAS/5,000 lbs/trip in the Eastern US/CA Area
CC/GOM YT - 250/ Day
SNE YT -250/Day
SNE/MA Winter Flounder: 0
Windowpane Flounder: 0 lbs

This option includes restricted areas where gear is restricted to those that do not catch yellowtail flounder and winter flounder. Gears being considered include:

Trawl Gear: Haddock separator trawl, eliminator trawl, five-point trawl, raised-footrope trawl, rope trawl. The haddock separator trawl, eliminator trawl, and raised footrope trawl are described in the regulations.

Rope trawl: The design includes a four-panel structure to increase headline height and large mesh in the front part of the trawl. The separator panel is made from a series of parallel ropes of different lengths. The panel is one-third from the fishing line in the vertical plane. There is a large escape opening in the bottom of the trawl.

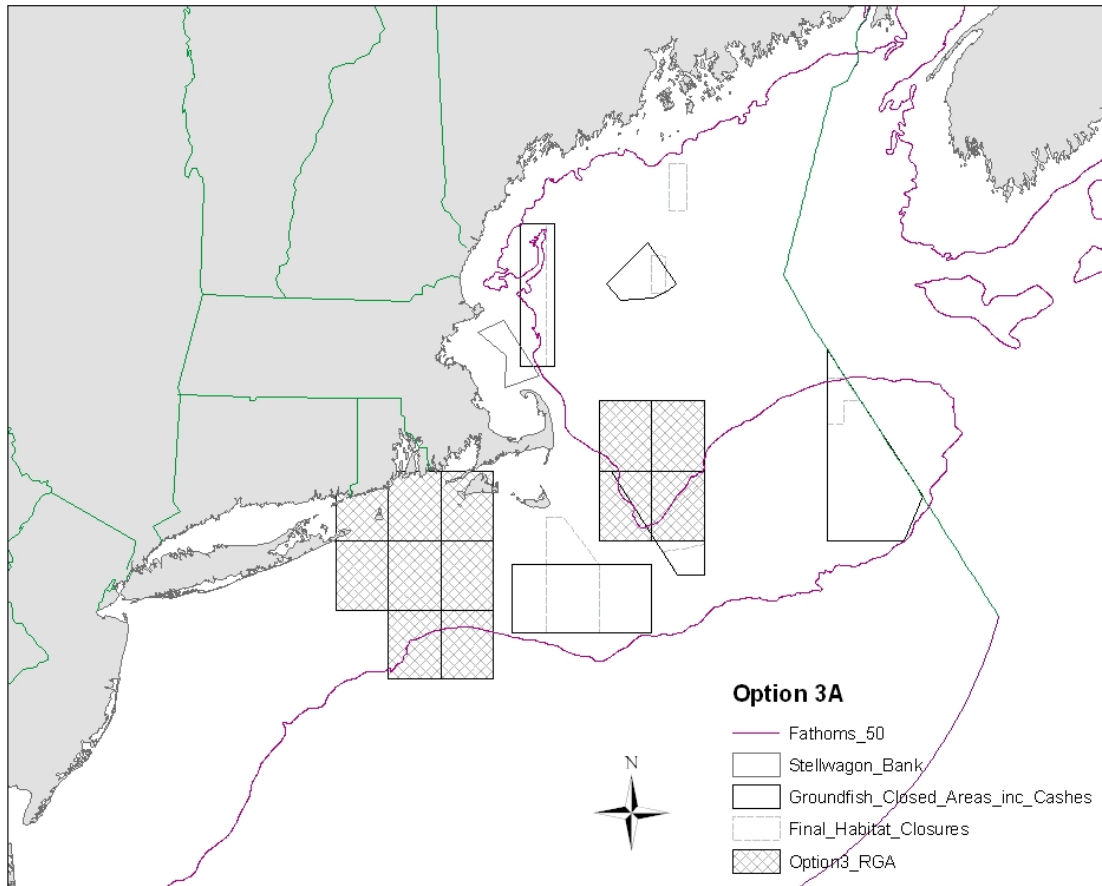
Five-point trawl: A modified three-bridle, four-panel box trawl based on a sweepless raised footrope trawl design that separates fish by exploiting differences between the behaviors of cod and haddock. The net flies over cod while retaining haddock, which generally move upward as the trawl approaches. Specifically, the net only contacts the bottom with 5 “drop chains” along the footrope.

Sink gillnets: No tiedown nets allowed unless using mesh over eight inches

Longline/tub trawls

Handgear

Figure 1 - Option 3a



Option 4 – DAS Reduction and restricted gear areas

This option reduces Category A DAS by 40 percent, as in the no Action alternative. This results in a Category A/Category B DAS split of 33/67. Most other current measures remain, including seasonal and rolling closures, differential DAS, and gear requirements. Trip limits would be:

GOM cod – 2,000 lbs./DAS; maximum 8,000 lbs/trip
GB cod – 1,000 lbs./DAS, maximum 10,000 lbs./trip, except 500 lbs./DAS, maximum 5,000 lbs./trip in the eastern US/CA area
CC/GOM YT -250/Day
SNE YT -250/Day
GB YT -10,000/Trip
SNE/MA WFL: 0
Windowpane Flounder: 0 lbs

A key feature of this option is the addition of areas where only specific gear can be used while fishing on a groundfish DAS. In the gear areas, gear may be restricted to those gears that do not catch yellowtail flounder and winter flounder. Gears being considered include:

Trawl Gear: Haddock separator trawl, eliminator trawl, five point trawl, raised footrope trawl, rope trawl
Sink gillnets: No tiedown nets allowed unless using mesh over eight inches
Longline/tub trawls
Handgear

Figure 5 – Option 4A, restricted gear area

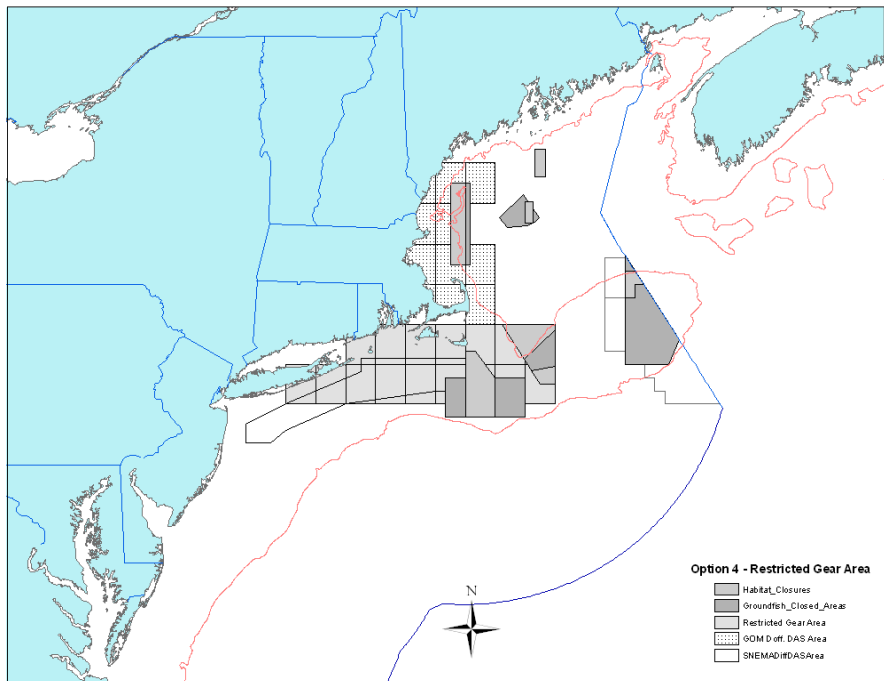


Table 1 – Changes in Exploitation

Spec	AREA	Needed Difference based on 2008 Exploitation	No Action	PDT Option 3A	PDT Option 4A
			% Difference	% Difference	% Difference
COD	GBANK	-50.20%	-17.10%	-53.60%	-40.70%
COD	GM	-18.70%	-16.30%	-51.60%	-33.80%
HAD	GBANK	272.40%	-18.70%	-53.10%	-42.00%
HAD	GM	58.50%	-17.50%	-54.20%	-38.80%
BLACK	GBANK	86.90%	-18.60%	-52.40%	-36.00%
BLACK	GM	-9.30%	-15.00%	-45.30%	-34.70%
BLACK	SNEMA	-100.00%	-20.30%	-66.90%	-59.90%
PL	ALL	83.30%	-16.30%	-56.20%	-36.40%
WITCH	ALL	-23.30%	-16.30%	-56.20%	-37.20%
WHK	ALL	28.10%	-17.20%	-62.60%	-38.70%
WIND	NORTH	-74.50%	-18.60%	-58.50%	-42.90%
WIND	SOUTH	-20.50%	-20.80%	-61.00%	-55.80%
YT	CCGOM	-15.70%	-18.40%	-57.20%	-47.30%
YT	GBANK	-15.30%	-20.00%	-58.60%	-41.40%
YT	SNEMA	-36.10%	-18.30%	-38.90%	-45.00%
POL	ALL	-35.10%	-17.30%	-60.90%	-38.30%
RED	ALL	368.00%	-17.70%	-61.50%	-39.10%